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THOMSON multimedia
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11 SEP. 2003

Patent Department
Administration

Datum/Date

04.09.2003

Zeichen/Ref./Réf.
PF030039

Anmeldung Nr./Application No./Demande n°//Patent Nr./Patent No./Brevet n°
03290401.3-1241/

Anmelder/Applicant/Demandeur//Patentinhaber/Proprietor/Titulaire
Thomson Licensing S.A.

COMMUNICATION

The European Patent Office herewith transmits the partial European search report under Rule 46(1) EPC relating to the above-mentioned European patent application.

Copies of the documents cited in the search report are enclosed.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the following:

The Search Division informs the applicant that if the European search report is also to cover inventions other than the invention first mentioned in the claims, a further search fee must be paid for each of these inventions, within **ONE MONTH** after notification of this communication.

Note to users of the automatic debiting procedure:

Unless the EPO receives prior instructions to the contrary, the search fee(s) will be debited on the last day of the period for payment. For further details see the Arrangements for the automatic debiting procedure, Supplement to OJ EPO 06/1994.

☐ The abstract was modified by the Search Division and the definitive text is attached to the present communication.

☐ The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the provisions of the European Patent Convention to such an extent that it is not possible to carry out a meaningful search into the state of the art on the basis of some of the claims.

Claims searched completely:

Claims searched incompletely:

Claims not searched:

Reason for the limitation of the search:

☐ Additional copy (copies) of the documents cited in the European search report.

NTFC / SEARCH FEE
Deadline
Date: 4/10/2003

NO

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REGISTERED LETTER

EPO FORM 1507.2 (09.94)
DREP

AO
RCA PF030039

CITED BY APPLICANT





European Patent
Office

PARTIAL EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

under Rule 46, paragraph 1 of the European Patent Convention

Application Number

EP 03 29 0401

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X	EP 0 516 378 A (SONY CORP) 2 December 1992 (1992-12-02) * the whole document *	1-3,6-8, 12,14	H04N5/04 H04N5/073
X	US 3 435 141 A (OXLEY VINCENT C ET AL) 25 March 1969 (1969-03-25) * the whole document *	1,12,14	
A,D	DE 40 30 148 A (BROADCAST TELEVISION SYST) 26 March 1992 (1992-03-26)		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			H04N
LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION			
The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:			
see sheet B			
The present partial European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims.			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		15 August 2003	Yvonnet, J
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			



European Patent
Office

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B

Application Number
EP 03 29 0401

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-14

Video device and method for synchronising time bases of
video devices which transmit and receive analog or digital
video signals

2. Claims: 15-16

Video devices transmitting and receiving compressed data
streams

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 03 29 0401

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

15-08-2003

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
EP 0516378	A	02-12-1992	JP	3230221 B2	19-11-2001
			JP	4348674 A	03-12-1992
			DE	69216473 D1	20-02-1997
			DE	69216473 T2	24-04-1997
			EP	0516378 A1	02-12-1992
			US	5303050 A	12-04-1994
US 3435141	A	25-03-1969	NONE		
DE 4030148	A	26-03-1992	DE	4030148 A1	26-03-1992
			JP	4313963 A	05-11-1992



This application is covered by the extended European search report pilot project at present running within the European Patent Office, applied to all European patent applications filed as first filing and searched on or after 01.07.03. Under this project the EPO issues together with the search report an opinion on whether the application and the invention to which it relates meet the requirements of the EPC. This non-binding opinion is issued free of charge as a service. This opinion may be used as the basis for an informed decision as to whether it is desired to pursue the application further or not.

For further details of this pilot project, the applicant's attention is directed to the Official Journal edition 5/2003. If any further immediate questions or comments arise the EPO Customer Services: +31-70-340 4500 or +49-89-2399 2828 can be contacted.

The attached opinion reveals that the application or the invention to which it relates appear not to meet the requirements of the Convention (see comments on enclosed Form 2906).

If the applicant wishes to continue with this application the examination fee must be paid. Where appropriate amendments can be filed to address the objections raised in the opinion, thus shortening the overall procedure. If no amendments are filed, the opinion will be re-issued as the first official communication under Article 96(2) and Rule 51(2) EPC.

If the examination fee has already been paid and the right to the communication under Article 96(1) EPC has been waived for this application, the first official communication under Article 96(2) and Rule 51(2) EPC will be issued promptly.



Bescheld/Protokoll (Anlage)

Communication/Minutes (Annex)

Notification/Procès-verbal (Annexe)

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Anmelde-Nr.:
Application No.: 03 290 401.3
Demande n°:

The examination is being carried out on the following application documents:

Text for the Contracting States:

AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HU IE IT LU MC NL PT SE SI SK TR LI

Description, pages:

1-24 as originally filed

Claims, No.:

1-16 as originally filed

Drawings, sheets:

[SPEC0411]-2/2 as originally filed

1. The following document is referred to in this communication; the numbering will be adhered to in the rest of the procedure:

D1: EP-A-516378

2. The Search Division has put forward an objection of lack of unity (Article 82 EPC), the reasons for the objection being as follows:

D1 discloses -according to terms of claim 15- in particular a first device having an output port for outputting a video signal, an input port for inputting control information and a time base which is adapted to switch the phase of the video signal and thus the output video signal by a phase angle specified by said control information.

D1 also discloses -according to terms of claim 16- a second device having an input port for inputting a video signal, a reference input representative of video timing requested by a mixer for receiving reference horizontal and/or vertical signals, and means for determining a phase angle between the video signal and the reference horizontal and/or vertical signals, and an output port for outputting control information specifying said phase angle.



When comparing the disclosure of D1 with the subject-matter of independent claims 15 and 16, it presently appears that the remaining special technical feature involved in claims 15 and 16, representing the contribution over the prior art, is considered to be that the data stream is compressed (resp. decompressed) in a compression (resp. decompression) engine, and that means determine a frequency error between the reference pixel frequency and the compression engine pixel frequency.

Neither this nor any corresponding technical feature is present in the subject-matter of claims 1-14, so that the technical relationship between the subject-matter of claims 1-14 and claims 15-16 required by Rule 30 is lacking, and the requirement for unity of invention referred to in Article 82 EPC is not fulfilled.

Hence the Examining division considers that the following separate inventions or groups of inventions are not so linked to form a single general inventive concept:

1) claims 1-14: video device and method for synchronising time bases of video devices which transmit and receive analog or digital video signals

2) claims 15-16: video devices transmitting and receiving compressed data streams

Since the applicant has not indicated on which invention searched by the Search Division the further prosecution of the application should be based, no further examination can be carried out for the time being (cf. Guidelines, C-III, 7.11). The applicant is asked to state upon which invention further prosecution of this application should be based and to limit the application accordingly. Other inventions are to be excised from the claims, description and drawings if any.

The subject-matter to be excised may be made the subject of one or more divisional applications. The divisional applications must be filed directly at the European Patent Office in Munich or its branch at The Hague and in the language of the proceedings relating to the present application, cf. Article 76(1) and Rule 4 EPC.